

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS
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USLO PEKING
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU
CINCEUR
CINCLANT
CINCUSNAVEUR

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MILITARY ADDRESSEES ALSO FOR POLADS.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR/XO/US/UK

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF MR. SEYMOUR WEISS' STATEMENT
BEFORE THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
HFAC ON MARCH 6, 1974, FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE,
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I AM PLEASED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WITH YOU
OUR NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY AS IT RELATES TO THE INDIAN
OCEAN IN GENERAL AND TO THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF OUR
FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA IN PARTICULAR. I AM WELL AWARE
THAT THIS COMMITTEE HAS HAD A CONTINUING INTEREST IN THIS
AREA, AS REFLECTED BY THE FOUR SERIES OF HEARINGS YOU HAVE
CONDUCTED IN THE LAST THREE YEARS. OUR HOPE TODAY IS TO
CONTRIBUTE, THROUGH CONTINUED DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE
AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES, TO THE COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION
OF THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.

BEFORE MOVING INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF MY STATEMENT I WOULD
LIKE TO LAY TO REST SOME MISCONCEPTIONS, I AM SURE NOT

SHARED BY THIS COMMITTEE, SURROUNDING U.S. INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. I KNOW THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF THE CONTENTION IN SOME QUARTERS THAT THE U.S. IS A "JOHNNY-COME-LATELY" IN THE AREA AND THAT OUR PRESENCE, AS WELL AS THAT OF OTHER "OUTSIDE" POWERS, THREATENS THE

STABILITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE LITTORAL POWERS. THIS ALLEGATION IS WITHOUT SUBSTANCE.

THE UNITED STATES HAS HAD A LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE INDIAN OCEAN THAT DATES FROM THE DAWN OF OUR DOMESTIC SHIPPING IN WORLD COMMERCE. OUR NEW ENGLAND WHALERS VENTURED THROUGHOUT THE INDIAN OCEAN IN THE LATTER PART OF THE 18TH AND WELL INTO THE 19TH CENTURIES. ALTHOUGH OUR MOST IMPORTANT INTERESTS HAVE TRADITIONALLY CENTERED IN THE ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC BASINS, WE HAVE ALSO BEEN ACTIVE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND HAVE MAINTAINED CLOSE TIES ON MANY LEVELS WITH THE COUNTRIES THAT BORDER IT. IT IS A REGION OF ENORMOUS VARIETY, NOT UNIFIED BY ANY COMMON PERSPECTIVE OR PREDOMINANT INTEREST. THE LITTORAL COUNTRIES SEEM ONLY TO HAVE SHARED A COMMON DESIRE TO TACKLE THEIR POST-INDEPENDENCE PROBLEMS IN A CONTEXT OF PEACE AND STABILITY AND OUR POLICIES TOWARD THE REGION HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO FOSTER AND PRESERVE SUCH A CONTEXT.

THE OVERRIDING EXTERNAL IMPRINT IN THE AREA DURING THE PAST TWO CENTURIES HAS BEEN BRITISH, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT FRENCH, PORTUGUESE, AND DUTCH. BRITISH CONTROL AND INFLUENCE

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ENCE THROUGH WORLD WAR II EXTENDED IN A BROAD ARC FROM CAPE TOWN, UP THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA, THROUGH THE MIDDLE EAST TO THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT AND THENCE TO SOUTHEAST ASIA. BY THE EARLY 1960'S, TWELVE NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES HAD EMERGED FROM TERRITORIES FORMERLY UNDER BRITISH CONTROL. IN 1968, THE BRITISH LABOR GOVERNMENT, RECOGNIZING THE LIMITATIONS OF THE BRITISH ECONOMIC POSITION, ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION TO SUBSTANTIALLY PHASE DOWN THEIR MILITARY PRESENCE EAST OF SUEZ BY THE EARLY 1970'S, INCLUDING PHASING OUT THEIR FORCES FROM THE PERSIAN GULF BY THE END OF 1971.

THE BRITISH HAVE MADE IT CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THEY CONTINUE TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN RESIDUAL MILITARY FORCES TO UNDERSCORE THESE INTERESTS. THIS IS MANIFEST IN BRITAIN'S CONTINUED MILITARY CONTRIBUTION TO AND SUPPORT OF CENTO, THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXPANDED RAF FACILITIES AT MASIRAH ISLAND OFF THE COAST OF OMAN AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE FIVE POWER DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA. ABOVE ALL, THE BRITISH HAVE BEEN ACTIVE PARTNERS IN SUPPORTING AN EXPANDED U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN

OCEAN, A FACT ATTESTED TO BY THEIR ORIGINAL AGREEMENT TO OUR JOINT USE OF DIEGO GARCIA, AND NOW TO THE PROPOSED UP-GRADING OF THESE FACILITIES.

FRANCE STILL CONTROLS SOME TERRITORY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA AND SUPPORTS A SIGNIFICANT NAVAL PRESENCE THERE THROUGH THEIR USE OF SEVERAL ISLANDS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, INCLUDING REUNION AND THE STRATEGIC PORT OF DJIBOUTI IN THE GULF OF ADEN. THEY ALSO HAVE HAD ACCESS TO THE LARGE NAVAL BASE AT DIEGO SUAREZ IN THE MALAGASY REPUBLIC.

SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN BEGAN IN EARNEST IN 1968 AND HAS GROWN STEADILY SINCE THEN AS SOVIET POLICY INTERESTS HAVE EXPANDED. AS THE FIGURES ON THE CHART SHOW, THERE HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC RISE IN THE NUMBER OF SHIP DAYS SPENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, FROM JUST OVER 1,000 IN 1968 TO OVER 8,200 IN 1973. BY COMPARISON, U.S. SHIP DAYS REMAINED RELATIVELY CONSTANT AT ABOUT 1,150 SHIP DAYS, WITH A MODEST INCREASE TO JUST OVER 2,000 LAST YEAR. WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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THE PROBABLE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE, A STILL GREATER SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WILL BE POSSIBLE AND IS LIKELY.

THE SOVIETS HAVE SIGNIFICANT ACCESS TO PORT FACILITIES AT BERBERA, IN THE SOMALI REPUBLIC; AT ADEN; AND ANCHORAGES THAT THEY USE OFF SOCOTRA ISLAND. AS THEIR NAVAL FORCES AND AIRLIFT CAPABILITIES HAVE GROWN, THEY HAVE DEMONSTRATED A CAPABILITY TO PROJECT MILITARY POWER INTO MORE DISTANT AREAS AND TO INFLUENCE EVENTS WHERE THEIR MAJOR INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE, AS IN THE MIDDLE EAST LAST YEAR.

OUR FIRST POST-WORLD WAR II MILITARY PRESENCE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE AREA IN 1948 WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OUR MIDDLE EAST FORCE (MIDEASTFOR). THIS SMALL FORCE CONSISTED OF A FLAGSHIP HOMEPORTED AT FACILITIES MADE AVAILABLE BY THE BRITISH AT BAHRAIN WITH TWO DESTROYERS PERIODICALLY DEPLOYED ON A ROTATIONAL BASIS FROM THE ATLANTIC FLEET. IN 1951, A SAC RECOVERY BASE BECAME OPERATIONAL AT DHAHRAN. AT SAUDI REQUEST, THIS BASE WAS TERMINATED IN THE EARLY 1960'S, BUT BY AGREEMENT WITH THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT, THE MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND CONTINUES TO USE DHAHRAN IN ITS WORLDWIDE OPERATIONS.

THE MAJOR THRUST OF OUR POLICIES DURING THE 1950'S AND 1960'S WAS REPRESENTED BY THE SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WE DEVOTED TO THE AREA, SUPPORTED BY SEVERAL BILATERAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS DESIGNED TO ASSIST THE NEW STATES IN THE AREA TO BECOME STRONG ENOUGH TO PRESERVE THEIR OWN INDEPENDENCE.

SUCH STRIFE AS HAS OCCURRED IN THE LITTORAL REGION HAS, IN FACT, COME FROM HISTORIC TENSIONS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES THEMSELVES. ALTHOUGH AT VARIOUS TIMES THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF DRAGGING "GREAT POWER" RIVALRIES INTO THE REGION AND ATTEMPTING TO MEDDLE IN THE AFFAIRS OF ITS COUNTRIES, WE HAVE, IN FACT, TRIED TO USE OUR INFLUENCE TO URGE RESTRAINT TO CONTAIN OR DAMPEN INTRAREGIONAL RIVALRIES AND HOSTILITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, WE EMBARGOED MOST ARMS SALES TO INDIA AND PAKISTAN FOLLOWING THE 1965 WAR, A STEP IN WHICH WE WERE NOT JOINED BY OTHER WEAPONS-
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PRODUCING COUNTRIES. ALTHOUGH WE WERE NOT ABLE TO PREVENT ANOTHER OUTBREAK OF WAR ON THE SUBCONTINENT IN 1971, WE MADE MAJOR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO AVERT IT AND HAVE WORKED SINCE THEN TO ENCOURAGE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIMLA AGREEMENT AND NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS AMONG THE THREE COUNTRIES INVOLVED. WE HAVE ALSO FROM TIME TO TIME USED OUR INFLUENCE TO DAMPEN RIVALRY BETWEEN KENYA AND SOMALIA AND BETWEEN SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA. WE HAVE CLOSE TIES TO SEVERAL OF THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES IN THE PERSIAN GULF AREA AND HAVE USED OUR INFLUENCE TO COUNSEL RESTRAINT AGAINST THE LATENT RIVALRIES OF THE AREA.

BUT IT WAS WITH THE OCTOBER 1973 HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST THAT THE VITAL NECESSITY OF HAVING A DEMONSTRABLE U.S. CAPABILITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN/PERSIAN GULF AREA WAS SO SHARPLY BROUGHT HOME. IT WAS A CLASSIC CASE WHERE THE FACT THAT THE U.S. HAD A PRESENCE IN THE AREA, AND WAS SEEN BY ALL TO HAVE IT THERE, MADE IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT IT WOULD EVER HAVE TO BE USED.

IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, IT WAS A REINFORCEMENT FOR THE SIGNALLY SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS OF SECRETARY KISSINGER TO BRING THE PARTIES IN THE CONFLICT TO THE PEACE TABLE. IT IMPRESSED UPON BOTH SIDES THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS INTERESTED IN A RESOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT. IN SHORT, IT PLAYED THE TRADITIONAL ROLE WHICH MILITARY POWER SHOULD PLAY, THAT OF SUPPORTING DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES. BY THIS I DO NOT MEAN TO SUGGEST THAT MILITARY POWER WAS USED TO LEND COERCIVE FORCE TO OUR DIPLOMACY. RATHER, OUR VISIBLE MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA DEMONSTRATED THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO OUR DIPLOMATIC OBJECTIVE OF BRINGING THE PARTIES TOGETHER TO SEEK A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUES THAT HAVE PRODUCED SO MUCH DISCORD AND STRIFE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PLAY A VITAL INTERMEDIARY ROLE PRECISELY BECAUSE WE ARE A REGIONAL POWER WITH FORCES OF OUR OWN IN BOTH THE MEDITERRANEAN AS WELL AS THE INDIAN OCEAN AND MAINTAIN A CONTINUING POLITICAL AND SECURITY DIALOGUE WITH MANY OF THE PARTIES

INVOLVED. INDEED, IN THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS, AS THE
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SECRETARY OF STATE HAS DEMONSTRATED, IT IS ONLY THE UNITED STATES WHO HAS THE CONFIDENCE OF ALL THE CONTENDING PARTIES AND THUS OFFERS SOME HOPE OF BRINGING PEACE TO THE AREA.

WHILE IT IS ONLY NATURAL TO FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE IMMEDIATE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE RECENT MIDDLE EAST WAR IN CONSIDERING HOW OUR MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, PERSIAN GULF AND INDIAN OCEAN CAN CONTRIBUTE TO BRINGING PEACE TO THAT AREA, WE SHOULD NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT WE HAVE A BROAD RANGE OF OTHER INTERESTS WHICH ARE HIGHLY IMPORTANT IN THEIR OWN RIGHT. THE EVENTS OF RECENT WEEKS DO NOT REQUIRE BELABORING THE FACT THAT THE OIL RESOURCES OF THE AREA, PRIMARILY IN THE PERSIAN GULF, ARE VITAL TO OUR ALLIES AND ARE OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST TO US. ALTHOUGH ONLY A RELATIVELY SMALL PROPORTION OF U.S. OIL COMES FROM THAT AREA, A HANDFUL OF PERCENTAGE POINTS MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE AT THE GAS PUMPS, AS UNFORTUNATELY WE ALL KNOW.

THE U.S. OIL INDUSTRY HAS SUBSTANTIAL CAPITAL INVESTMENTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF REGION VALUED AT APPROXIMATELY \$3.5 BILLION. IN ADDITION, WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN, THE TWO AREAS OF THE FREE WORLD OF GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO U.S. SECURITY, ARE ABSOLUTELY DEPENDENT UPON OIL SUPPLIES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND THAT FACT ALONE MAKES IT OF INTEREST TO US. THE WORLD ECONOMY IS BY NOW SO INTEGRATED THAT FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION ON THE HIGH SEAS AND NON-INTERFERENCE WITH SEA LINES OF COMMUNICATION IS A MATTER OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY--EVEN THOSE NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

ASIDE FROM OIL, WE HAVE OTHER IMPORTANT COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE AREA. WE DO A SUBSTANTIAL TRADE WITH IRAN AND THE PERSIAN GULF SHEIKHDOMS, WITH INDIA AND PAKISTAN, WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND AFRICAN LITTORAL STATES--THE MAGNITUDE OF TRADE OPPORTUNITIES AND MINERAL EXPLOITATION HAS BEEN GROWING SIGNIFICANTLY, AND INCREASED REVENUES WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE THE AREA AN IMPORTANT MARKET FOR U.S. GOODS. GEOGRAPHICALLY THE INDIAN OCEAN IS A VITAL INTERNATIONAL BODY OF WATER WHICH MUST REMAIN AVAILABLE TO U.S. SURFACE TRAFFIC, COMMERCIAL AS WELL AS
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MILITARY. OUR AIRLINES CRISSCROSS THE REGION IN ROUTES

THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF AFRICA, AS WELL AS THE VITAL ROUND-THE-WORLD ROUTES OVER THE MIDDLE EAST. OUR PRESENCE

ON THE INDIAN OCEAN REINFORCES THE PROPOSITION THAT THE SEAS BELONG TO EVERYONE.

AND, NOT INSIGNIFICANTLY, THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION COMPRISES NEARLY ONE-FOURTH OF THE MEMBERS OF THE UN AND REPRESENTS ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION. A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES IN THE AREA PLAY A SIGNIFICANT INTERNATIONAL ROLE OR HAVE THE POTENTIAL FOR DOING SO. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THE AREA IS STILL ADJUSTING IN SOME CASES TO POST-COLONIAL INDEPENDENCE AND SOME OF ITS COUNTRIES SUFFER EXTREME POVERTY. IT IS BESET BY INTERNAL TENSIONS AND BY UNRESOLVED DIFFERENCES WITH NEIGHBOR STATES.

AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, THE U.S. HAS PLAYED AN ACTIVE DIPLOMATIC ROLE IN THE AREA SINCE WORLD WAR II, EXERCISING SUCH VARIED TOOLS OF DIPLOMACY AS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, POLITICAL MEDIATION AND UN INITIATIVES IN AN EFFORT TO DISCOURAGE CONFLICT AND CONTAIN IT WHEN IT OCCURS. OBVIOUSLY, ONE OF THE DIPLOMATIC LEVERS AVAILABLE TO US IS THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF A MILITARY PRESENCE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE MODEST PRESENCE WE HAVE TRADITIONALLY MAINTAINED IN THE PERSIAN GULF, SUPPLEMENTED AS NECESSARY BY MORE FREQUENT DEPLOYMENTS OF ADDITIONAL NAVAL SHIPS, SERVES THAT PURPOSE.

IN VIEW OF OUR BROAD INTERESTS, PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED, AND OF THE UNCERTAINTIES RAISED DURING THE MIDDLE EAST WAR LAST OCTOBER, WE INCREASED THE FREQUENCY OF OUR NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN FROM THE PACIFIC FLEET. ON THE BASIS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER ANNOUNCED ON DECEMBER 1 THAT WE INTENDED TO REESTABLISH THE PATTERN OF REGULAR VISITS OF U.S. NAVY VESSELS INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN THAT HAD BEEN DISRUPTED BY THE VIETNAM WAR AND THAT "WE EXPECT THAT OUR PRESENCE THERE WILL BE MORE FREQUENT AND MORE REGULAR THAN IN THE PAST."

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CURRENT U.S. NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN ARE CONSISTENT WITH OUR POLICY OF AUGMENTING, FROM TIME TO TIME, THE MINIMAL PERMANENT PRESENCE REPRESENTED BY COMIDEASTFOR THAT WE HAVE MAINTAINED IN THE AREA FOR OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY. IN OUR JUDGMENT, A U.S. PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO A DETERRENCE AGAINST THE LIKELIHOOD THAT FORCE OR THE THREAT OF FORCE MIGHT BE EMPLOYED BY OTHERS. A MILITARY PRESENCE CAN SUPPORT EFFECTIVE DIPLOMACY WITHOUT ITS EVER HAVING TO BE

USED. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF U.S. FORCES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WILL HAVE A SALUTARY EFFECT BY UNDERSCORING OUR STRATEGIC MOBILITY, AND THUS

BY BEING IN AN EFFECTIVE POSITION TO GIVE STRENGTH TO
OUR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO FURTHER OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS.

MAINTAINING FORCES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IS NOT, HOWEVER,
WITHOUT DIFFICULTY. THE SHIPS THAT HAVE BEEN RECENTLY
DEPLOYED HAVE COME FROM THE WESTERN PACIFIC. IN VIEW OF
THE EXTENDED DISTANCES INVOLVED, IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY
TO MAKE TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENTS TO PROVIDE FOR BUNKERING
AND LIMITED FACILITY SUPPORT FROM FRIENDLY COUNTRIES IN
THE AREA.

IN LOOKING AHEAD, IF WE WISH TO HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO
MOVE OR MAINTAIN OUR SHIPS IN THE AREA, DEVELOPMENT OF
MORE PRACTICAL SUPPORT FACILITIES SEEMS ESSENTIAL. AN
OBVIOUS SOLUTION IS DIEGO GARCIA WITH SOME BUNKERING AND
AIRCRAFT LANDING RIGHTS NORMALLY AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE IN
THE AREA.

IN THE EARLY 1960'S, THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND DEFENSE
BEGAN THINKING OF THE LONGER-TERM STRATEGIC REQUIREMENTS
OF THE U.S. IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. OUR ASSESSMENT OF
THE POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REGION PARALLELED
BRITISH THINKING. IN 1965, THE BRITISH CONSTITUTED A
NUMBER OF INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS UNDER THEIR CONTROL INTO
WHAT IS KNOWN AS THE BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY, AND
BY AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES ON DECEMBER 30, 1966, THE U.S. AND
U.K. AGREED THAT THESE ISLANDS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR THE
DEFENSE PURPOSES OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS FOR AN INITIAL
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PERIOD OF 50 YEARS. IN DECEMBER OF 1970, BOTH GOVERNMENTS
AGREED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY
ON DIEGO GARCIA.

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH PROPOSES TO EXPAND THIS PRESENCE TO
MAKE IT A USEFUL AND EFFECTIVE, ALTHOUGH MINIMAL, SUPPORT
FACILITY FOR U.S. FORCES OPERATING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.
THIS FACILITY WOULD BE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR A
FLEXIBLE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES INCLUDING LIMITED MAINTENANCE,
BUNKERING, AIRCRAFT STAGING IN SUPPORT OF NAVAL PATROLS,
LOGISTICS SUPPORT, AND ENHANCED COMMUNICATIONS.

THE CURRENT SUPPLEMENTAL MILITARY APPROPRIATIONS BUDGET
THAT HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO CONGRESS CONTAINS A REQUEST FOR
\$29 MILLION TO IMPROVE SUPPORT FACILITIES ON DIEGO
GARCIA. SPECIFIC PROJECTS INVOLVED ARE AN INCREASED FUEL
STORAGE CAPACITY, DEEPENING OF THE LAGOON TO PROVIDE AN
ANCHORAGE, LENGTHENING THE EXISTING 8,000-FOOT RUNWAY AND

EXPANDING THE AIRFIELD PARKING AREA, IN ADDITION TO CERTAIN
IMPROVEMENTS TO THE EXISTING COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY.
ALTHOUGH THESE WOULD BE IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE

EXISTING FACILITIES, IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT THEY WOULD HARDLY CONSTITUTE A MAJOR BASE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE FACILITY WOULD CONSIST OF A SINGLE, AIR-TRANSPORTABLE HANGAR AND WOULD ENABLE SUCH REPAIRS AS AN EMERGENCY ENGINE CHANGE. THE FUEL STORAGE CAPACITY WOULD BE ABOUT THAT WHICH WOULD BE CARRIED BY THREE NAVY OILERS OR ONLY A MODEST FRACTION OF THE CAPACITY OF ONE OF TODAY'S MODERN SUPER-TANKERS.

FOR ALL OF THIS, I DO NOT WISH TO UNDERSTATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROPOSED EXPANSION; IT IS VITAL IF WE ARE TO OPERATE EFFICIENTLY IN THESE WATERS. I MERELY WISH TO UNDERSCORE THAT THIS DOES NOT REPRESENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MAJOR NEW BASE OF UNLIMITED CAPACITY AND IN FACT WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT THE VERY SIZE OF THE ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA PRECLUDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN "INDIAN OCEAN SAN DIEGO."

IN CONCLUSION, LET ME EMPHASIZE THAT OUR DEPLOYMENTS AND UNCLASSIFIED

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SUPPORT FACILITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN ARE NOT A THREAT TO ANY NATION OR GROUP OF NATIONS. IT IS A SIMPLE FACT, HOWEVER, THAT POWERFUL MARITIME NATIONS ARE ACTIVE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH HAD VIRTUALLY NO FORCES THERE AT ALL PRIOR TO 1968 AND WHICH OF LATE HAS MAINTAINED A PRESENCE APPROXIMATELY FOUR TIMES THAT OF OUR OWN. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT EITHER OUR INTERESTS, OR THOSE OF THE LITTORAL STATES, ARE SERVED BY OUR INABILITY TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY IN THE AREA.

WE ARE NOT IN AN ARMS RACE WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA, AND OUR REQUIREMENTS FOR A FACILITY AT DIEGO GARCIA ARE RELATED TO AN ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF U.S. INTERESTS AND CONSIDERATIONS, ONLY ONE OF WHICH BEARS ON THE LEVEL OF SOVIET DEPLOYMENTS THERE. SUCH ARRANGEMENTS AS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO AGREE TO WITH THE SOVIET UNION CONCERNING THE LEVELS OF OUR RESPECTIVE NAVAL FORCES IN THE AREA ARE NOT ONLY UNLIKELY TO BE INHIBITED BY OUR HAVING A CAPABILITY TO DEPLOY FORCES TO THE AREA; IN FACT, PRECISELY THE CONTRARY WOULD BE TRUE.

WE SEEK NOTHING MORE THAN AN ABILITY TO STAGE FORCES IN THE AREA SIMILAR TO THE ABILITY THE SOVIET UNION PRESENTLY HAS USING PORT FACILITIES AT BERBERA IN SOMALIA AND ADEN,

PLUS THE ANCHORAGES THEY ROUTINELY USE OFF THE ISLAND OF SOCOTRA. OUR CAPACITY TO DEPLOY IN NO WAY PREJUDICES FUTURE AGREEMENTS ON LEVELS OF FORCES TO BE DEPLOYED. THUS, WHILE WE REMAIN OPEN TO CONSTRUCTIVE POSSIBILITIES FOR AN ARMS CONTROL ARRANGEMENT BEARING ON SPECIFIC DEPLOYMENT LEVELS IN THE AREA, WE SEE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT

SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD PRECLUDE THE NEED FOR THE CAPABILITY WHICH DIEGO GARCIA WOULD PROVIDE.

AND FINALLY, WHILE WE SYMPATHIZE WITH THE PRINCIPLES WHICH MOTIVATE SOME OF THE NATIONS IN THE AREA TO PROMOTE CONCEPTS SUCH AS THE "INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE," ALL MAJOR MARITIME POWERS, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION, HAVE BEEN DOUBTFUL ABOUT THIS INITIATIVE BECAUSE OF ITS IMPLICATION THAT LITTORAL STATES SOMEHOW HAVE A SPECIAL RIGHT TO LIMIT OR CONTROL THE USE OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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HIGH SEAS BY OTHERS. THE UNITED STATES HAS LONG HELD THE VIEW THAT THERE MUST BE UNIMPAIRED FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION ON THE HIGH SE

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Message Attributes

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TAGS: MARR, XO, US, UK, (WEISS, SEYMOUR)
To: ABU DHABI
ADDIS ABABA
BANGKOK
BLANTYRE
CAIRO
CANBERRA

COLOMBO
CAPE TOWN
DACCA
DAR ES SALAAM
ISLAMABAD
JIDDA
JAKARTA
KUALA LUMPUR
KUWAIT
LONDON
LISBON
LUSAKA
MANILA
MANAMA
MOGADISCIO
MUSCAT
NAIROBI
NEW DELHI
PARIS
PORT LOUIS
PRETORIA
RANGOON
SANAA
SEOUL
SINGAPORE
TANANARIVE
TEHRAN
TOKYO
THE HAGUE
WELLINGTON
NATO
MOSCOW
ROME
PEKING
USUN N Y
HONG KONG
TEL AVIV INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU
CINCEUR
CINCLANT
CINCUSNAVEUR

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005